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Ministry of Forests and Range

FOREST PROGRAM GAINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR QUALITY

VICTORIA – A national institute that fosters quality in private and public programs has awarded certification to a unique B.C. forestry program that measures trends in sustainability, making it the first provincial government program to earn this achievement, announced Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman today.

"We want to lead the world in sustainable environmental management because we believe in our forests and our forest industry," said Coleman. "We have worked hard to create a program that gives us the solid, scientific data we need to continuously improve our forest practices. This certification is a strong endorsement of the quality of our work."

The Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP) earned the level one certification from the National Quality Institute for excellence in leadership, focus on citizens and clients, and a commitment to continuous improvement. FREP was created in 2003 by the Ministry of Forests and Range and the Ministry of Environment.

FREP invests $4 million a year to monitor and evaluate the impact of forestry practices on the environment. Each year, ministry staff collect data at hundreds of randomly selected sites throughout the province. These data are evaluated by experts, and recommendations are made to improve forest practices.

This fall, the results of a number of evaluations will be released, addressing topics including biodiversity, grazing resources, tree species diversity and the performance of recently reforested stands. A report on the effects of road building and harvesting practices on worker safety will be published later this year.

FREP is a foundation of the provincial government's results-based Forest and Range Practices Act, which governs activities such as logging, road building and reforestation on Crown land. By assessing whether forests are being managed in a sustainable manner, FREP is helping to ensure that government's objectives for the conservation of forest resources are being achieved.

The public is invited to read reports online at: www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/

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